



CASA of Gila County

Newsletter

September 2016

New faces, New Locations!

In January 2015, Dan McKeen was hired as coordinator for Gila County's CASA Program. Dan supervised volunteers in both Southern and Northern sections, attending dependency court hearings in both Globe and Payson, which required him to travel to Globe every Tuesday, along with completing all the necessary administrative duties and responsibilities. Dan previously was employed with Gila County Probation Department where he became familiar with the court system. Dan has developed a good rapport with the current pool of volunteers. He has been a resident of Payson since 1987, is married and has two adult children. Dan continues to make positive connections within the community that have been a great benefit to the program.

In March 2016, Patti Dremier was hired as the new Administrative Support Staff and works out of the Payson office. Patti spent a short time working for Gila County Public Works in Globe before transferring to Superior Courts. Patti currently lives in Rye with her husband, Jim. Patti moved from Wisconsin to Arizona in 2015, bringing with her 24 years of experience as a public servant employee.

After being awarded a grant from Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), the county recruited a second coordinator to cover Southern Gila County and place a strong focus on recruitment of additional volunteers. In May 2016, Emily Leverance was hired and works out of the Globe office. Emily worked at the Globe Public Library for 5 years and then with Probation briefly before joining CASA. Emily lives in Globe with her 8-year old daughter, Chandra.

Payson office has temporarily moved. We are still upstairs Building A, and waiting for the construction to be completed for our new office across from upstairs conference room.

CASA Calendar

CASA Recognition
Corner

CASA Library

Knowing Who You
Are

Various Resources

CASAaz tip

CASA OF GILA COUNTY

Northern
714 S Beeline Hwy, Ste 104,
Payson AZ 85541

Southern
(mailing) 1400 E Ash St
(physical) 1350 E Monroe St,
Globe AZ 85501

casaofgilacounty.org

**Globe CASA office has moved to the
new Copper Admin Building at 1350
E. Monroe St, behind the courthouse.**

Dan's CASAaz Tip: What is the difference between a "contact" and an "activity" entry in CASAaz? Basically, the activity entry is non-case related time you spend as a CASA, such as working the CASA booth at the fair, working in our CASA office, or CASA recruiting. The question has been raised about how to enter "administrative" time it takes to enter contacts into the system and or pickup mail. Our recommendation is to just enter another contact under Contact Log, for the time it took to make all the entries, identifying it as "Desk Work."

September Calendar of Events:

- 09/20 Dependency Court Hearings Globe
- 09/22 CASA Support Meeting ~ Payson office
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- 09/22 **NO scheduled** Dependency Court Hearings Payson
- 09/27 Dependency Court Hearings Globe
- 09/29 Dependency Court Hearings Payson

October Calendar of Events:

- 10/04 Dependency Court Hearings Globe
- 10/06 Dependency Court Hearings Payson
- 10/11 Dependency Court Hearings Globe
- 10/13 **NO scheduled** Dependency Court Hearings Payson
- 10/14 Dependency Attorney Training
(hosted by AOC, CIP and Juvenile Court Gila County)
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Dream Manor Inn, Globe
- 10/18 Dependency Court Hearings Globe
- 10/20 Dependency Court Hearings Payson

Current Stats for Gila County

Dependency cases Southern area: 40 (68 children)
Dependency cases Northern area: 30 (47 children)
Current CASAs: 11
Recruiter: 1
Current Applicants: 5

That is only a 16% ratio

Congratulations

Way to Go!

CASA's Recognition Corner

September Birthdays:

Teri Jones 30th

October Birthdays:

Jerry Shaver 11th

Tom Jones 21st



Years of Service with
CASA of Gila County

Margaret Celix 19 yrs
Leslie & Robert Tarallo 14 yrs
Bob McLarty 7 yrs
Diana Wheeler 7 yrs
Teri & Tom Jones 7 yrs
Jan Redmond 5 yrs
Lani Shaver 4 yrs
Joanie King 1 yr
Jerry Shaver 1 yr

WELCOME to CASA

Birgit & Phil Spencer
(Payson)



Calling all Volunteers

We are encouraging all of our current CASAs to make an intentional effort at recruiting one new volunteer every year so that our program can raise this ratio!

It's often easier for those of us who volunteer with Arizona's Foster Care System to find the challenges and weaknesses of the system but, if we dig a little, we can find successful efforts at various levels of government to change the system for the benefit of the children it serves.

In 2014, the US Government passed the "preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act," the intention of which was to "assist foster parents in applying a reasonable and prudent parent standard in a manner that protects child safety, while also allowing children to experience normal and beneficial activities." For the foster child, this law eliminates the need for court orders to approve normal family/child activities such as extracurricular activities or out-of-state vacations with the foster family. It also eliminates the need to conduct criminal background checks of the parents of a child's friend before approving a "sleepover." For the first time since the bill passed, I noted an entry entitled "Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard" in one of the documents I read this week in preparation for my next Foster Care Review Board. That law allowed the child whose case we are reviewing to participate in extracurricular activities (primarily basketball and the Rocket Science club) without the inconvenience of obtaining a court order first. This makes the foster care experience just a *tad* more like a "real" family experience for the child.

Recently, California made substantial improvements to its Foster care system. Called *Continuum of Care Reforms (CCRs)*, the bill was prepared to "make sure that youth in foster care have their day-to-day physical, mental, and emotional needs met; have the greatest chance to grow up in permanent...homes; and have the opportunity to grow into self-sufficient, successful adults." (CA AB 403.) The reforms include: providing specific training for foster families, replacing long-term foster placements with more family-like settings; and transforming group homes into short-term, therapeutic homes to prepare children to live with foster families. In addition, efforts are being made in California to more accurately match the foster child to a foster family and to better train those foster parents, both of which will help prevent future placement changes. The CCRs also modify the rate structure for foster families and institute evaluations by youth and families of service providers.

And finally, in Arizona, several reporters for the Arizona Republic have been awarded a three-year Arizona Community Foundation grant to identify and explore problems that exist in Arizona's Foster Care system. The purpose of this grant is to "support in-depth investigative reporting about child welfare in Arizona" (www.azfoundaton.org). More specific goals include: understanding why reports of child abuse are rising in Arizona (up 28% in the last three years), investigating the system itself, and finding solutions to the problems they find there.

So, as bleak as things may look at times, there have been some improvements in foster care in AZ and the US. And with some concerted effort, those of us involved with foster care can identify system weaknesses and bring them to the attention of legislators and journalists to effect important changes to reduce at least some of the stress experienced by children in care.

-- Elizabeth Jacobs, FCRB Maricopa 19

Knowing Who You Are

~ Supporting Youth in Care to Develop Healthy Racial & Ethnic Identities
Casey Family Programs



Development of a healthy and racial identity is important in helping youth establish consistency in their lives with regard to how they view themselves. A healthy identity can be an important anchor from which positive outcomes are possible. For youth in care, this aspect of identity is often overlooked.

For child welfare advocates, including CASA's, to support youth in this work, they must have an understanding of their own racial and ethnic identity, investigate their assumptions and biases related to race and ethnicity and examine personal comfort levels around these issues. The KWYA project was designed to address these areas in addition to helping advocates develop practical ways to integrate racial and ethnic identity work into day-to-day practice for all youth, regardless of their race and ethnicity. This includes recommending that youth develop pride in their racial and ethnic heritage, establish skills around multicultural competence and prepare for racism and discrimination.

Gila County offered this training on August 31, 2016 at the Payson Public Library. Staff and volunteers that attended became more self-aware and equipped with the necessary skills and the ability to identify and advocate the best outcomes for all children.

The Key Concepts of the training were:

- 1) Healthy Racial & Ethnic Identity ~ set of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that emanate from one's membership in a particular racial or ethnic group
- 2) Stages Common in Racial & Ethnic Identity Models
- 3) Influences
- 4) Messages – both proactive and protective
- 5) Building Blocks - promoting racial & ethnic pride, developing multicultural competence and preparation for racism & discrimination.
- 6) Courageous Conversations

Definitions>

- Courageous Conversations: Dialogue that engages others in spite of interpersonal discomfort in order to challenge the assumption, biases and accepted structures of racism.
- Discrimination: To make distinctions on the basis of preference or prejudice. Involves any situation in which a group or individual is treated differently and sometimes unfairly based on something other than individual reason, usually their membership in a socially distinct group or category.
- Disproportionality: Situation in which particular racial/ethnic groups of children are represented in the Child Welfare System at a higher ratio than other racial/ethnic groups of youth. Because disproportionality encompasses both over-representation and disparity in well-being outcomes for children, it is vital to obtain a clear understanding and picture of how children of color are faring within the Child Welfare System.
- Ethnicity: A set of characteristics which result in a distinctive culture that a group of people share. In the U. S. ethnicity is a somewhat flexible term in meaning, but generally refers to a subset of the national culture in which people share one or more of the following characteristics: race, nationality, religion, ancestry, or language. Ethnicity sometimes refers to the group of people, as well as the culture itself.
- Power: The ability to determine and enforce the rules and make legitimate superiority based on race, economic worth, age, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation and religion.
- Prejudice: A preformed and unsubstantiated judgment or opinion about an individual or group, either favorable or unfavorable. The term often denotes an unfavorable or hostile attitude towards other people based on their membership in another social or ethnic group. Prejudice relies on stereotypes about the group against which the prejudice is directed.'
- Race: The term race distinguishes a population of humans from other populations. The most widely used human racial categories are based on visible traits, genes, and self-identification. Conceptions of race, as well as specific racial groupings, vary by culture and over time and are often controversial for scientific reasons as well as their impact on social identity and identity politics. Race is considered a social construct.
- Stereotype: An oversimplified, false, or generalized portrayal of a group of people. Stereotyping does not allow for exceptions or individual differences.
- White Privilege: An institutional, rather than personal, set of benefits granted to those who, by race, resemble the people who dominate the powerful positions in our institutions. One of the primary "white" privileges is that of having greater access to power and resources than people of color do.

Resources>

www.dismantlingracism.org/whiteladder.doc
www.teacher.scholastic.com/professional/diversity
www.tolerance.org/index.jsp
www.racemattersconsortium.org/docs/BobHillPaper_FINAL.pdf
aurora.wells.edu/~vim/Racial_Ethnic_Identity.pdf



Community Helping Hands

NPCT Holiday Program Registration

Non-Profits Coming Together was established to help displaced and disadvantaged children and their families during the Christmas season by providing clothing, food, books, jackets, shoes and toiletries. They also host a family Christmas Carnival for those children and families that qualify.

October 10 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

October 11 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Payson Public Library

Community Food Bank

Every Monday 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Presbyterian Church, Payson

Every Tuesday 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Monthly Food Distribution

1st Saturday of every Month doors open at 7:00 1st Church of the Nazarene, Payson
(a grocery cart full of food for \$10, purchase tickets on Friday by calling 474-5890)

Food Pantry and help with Utilities, Rent

Tues, Thurs and Sat 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul Society, Payson

Hope House (*transitional living for poor and homeless*)

Call 928-363-4052, Payson

Time Out Shelter (*for victims of DV*)

Call 928-472-8007, Payson

Gila County Comm Action Program (*utilities, rent, employment*)

Call 928-474-7192, Payson

Gila County Community Services

Call 928-425-7631, Globe

Emergency Clothing

**Gila Co Food Bank
Church of Christ**

**Call 928-425-3639, Globe
Call 928-473-3989, Miami**

****More resources will be spotlighted in next edition of our CASA of Gila County Newsletter****

CASA Library

Each edition of this newsletter will highlight two books available from our local CASA office library



A Child Called "It" is the unforgettable story of a child whose courage and unyielding determination enabled him to survive extreme life-threatening odds.

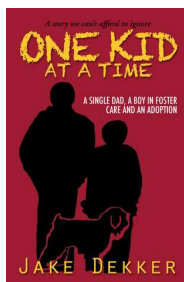
As a child, Dave was brutally beaten and starved by his emotionally unstable, alcoholic mother: a mother who played tortuous games--games that left him Dave nearly dead. With only his willpower to survive, Dave learned how to play his Mother's sinister games in order to survive because she no longer considered Dave a son but a slave, and no longer a boy but an "It."

Although A Child Called "It" contains situations of mistreatment Dave suffered, it is a real life story of the indomitable human spirit. This gripping account is told through the eyes of a child--who will pay any price in order to succeed.

When I finished reading this book, I thought volunteers. It's more than inspirational. It reminds children and the adults who care about them."

Jake lived the good life. Warm friendship, he enjoyed. From the outside he had the perfect That child turns out to be Danny, whose mother know him. His grandmother beat him. Danny lived loneliness and terror. Ordered into foster care, the

him. Against all odds, Danny is adopted by Jake.



it would appeal to all CASA/GAL us that our work enriches the lives of both
Michael S. Piraino, National CASA CEO

plenty of money and freedom to do what existence. But inside he longed for a child. abandoned him. His father in prison didn't nonstop days of unending anxiety, system isolated, drugged and betrayed

www.ifoster.org

Membership is free to all CASAs, Foster Care or Kinship Families and Youth

IFOSTER ANNOUNCES EMPLOYER TAX BILL FOR FOSTER YOUTH

IFOSTER IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR FOSTER YOUTH (IEOFY) ACT, **BILL #HR5947**. ON SEPT 7, REP. JIM MCDERMOTT (D-WASH) ADVANCED IFOSTER'S AGENDA OF HELPING FOSTER YOUTH GAIN PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT BY INTRODUCING IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE IEOFY ACT, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FEDERAL TAX CREDITS FOR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS WHO HIRE CURRENT AND FORMER TRANSITION-AGE FOSTER YOUTH FROM 16 TO 26 YEARS OLD, INCLUSIVE. THE BILL IS CO-SPONSORED BY REP. REICHERT (R-WASH), REP. DOGGETT (D-TEXAS), REP. DAVIS (D-IL), AND REP. REED (R-NY). SENATOR CASEY (D-PA) WILL BE INTRODUCING A COMPANION BILL IN THE SENATE.

CREATING EMPLOYER INCENTIVES IS KEY TO GROWING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR MOST VULNERABLE YOUTH. IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THE MINIMUM WAGE IS RISING, TAX CREDITS UP TO \$2,400 PER ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE WILL MAKE IT MORE ATTRACTIVE TO HIRE TAY IN A RANGE OF POSITIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. WHEN PASSED, THIS CREDIT WILL ENLIST PRIVATE EMPLOYERS AS ALLIES IN IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR THESE YOUTH WHILE REDUCING THEIR RELIANCE ON PUBLIC BENEFITS.

**Look for our CASA booth at the fair
in Globe Sept 22 – 25, 2016**



Help for Foster Care Families

Discounts are available at many utility companies for families that qualify for public assistance programs. Since Foster and Kinship children and youth qualify for Medicaid, and all foster children are automatically qualified for the National School Lunch Program, any household raising foster or kinship children should qualify. This also applies to transition –age youth living on their own and former foster youth with Medicaid to age 26.

COMPUTER ACCESS MATTERS!



The iFoster 1 Laptop program provides foster youth with the computers they need to succeed in school and find jobs. In the past 4 years, with the help of county child welfare agencies, philanthropy and caregiver's themselves, iFoster has provided over 7,800 computers to foster youth across 48 states, including Arizona.

ABOUT IFOSTER

iFoster's mission is to ensure that every child growing up outside their biological home has access to the resources and opportunities they need to become successful, independent adults.

iFoster is the virtual support system for foster children, youth and their caregivers connecting them to the resources, people and opportunities they need. iFoster makes this happen by:

1. Building the largest and most inclusive community of people and organizations raising these children and youth;
2. Providing the resources and opportunities these children and youth need to thrive through partnerships with companies, government agencies, non-profits, and foundations who can supply critical resources;
3. Collaborating with local partners to create a local support network that collectively supports these children and youth.